

rolling the reduced iron pellets at a temperature ranging between 800 and 1200°C

D1 sufficiently such that the reduced iron pellets undergo sintering.

D2 23. (Amended) A method of producing reduced iron pellets according to claim 4, wherein the reducing material comprises a carbonaceous material powder.

24. (Amended) A method of producing reduced iron pellets according to claim 4, further comprising first cooling the reduced iron pellets at least down to 600°C and then further cooling the reduced iron pellets down to a range between 23 and 100°C.

25. (Amended) A method of producing reduced iron pellets according to claim 4, further comprising providing a rotary cylinder having a heat retaining rolling portion positioned to receive the reduced iron pellets from a direct reducing furnace provided with a rotary flat floor for the reducing of the raw material pellets.

D3 26. (New) A method of producing reduced iron pellets according to claim 24, wherein the further cooling of the reduced iron pellets comprising providing a cooling furnace and spraying the reduced iron pellets with water.

27. (New) A method of producing reduced iron pellets according to claim 26, wherein the cooling furnace comprises a hopper.

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-8 and 23-27 are presently pending in this application, Claims 6-8 having been withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner, Claims 4, 23, 24 and 25 having been amended, and Claims 26 and 27 having been newly added by the present amendment.